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SPRINGTIME IN THE CHURCH GARDEN

When Prayer Means Power

SERMON BY HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

THERE are three ways in which men get what they want—thinking, working, praying. Concerning the first two no one has any doubt; if we are to fulfill our desires, of course we must think and work. But concerning the third, doubts are plentiful. In many minds such baffling questions rise concerning prayer that that whole area of experience is nullified.

In part, this difference is due to the fact that thought and work have not been ritualized. We are supposed to think wherever we happen to be, to work wherever our tasks carry us. These two ways of getting what we want run through the common hours of every day. They are not centered in a special building with a steeple on it, and we do not cast ourselves into a special posture, like kneeling, when we engage in them. But prayer has got itself ritualized; it is associated with sacred places, sacred practises, special moods, and special postures. So for many people prayer seems a formal, conventional, technically religious performance which they do not understand, and so they are left with only two ways of fulfilling their life's desires—they think and work.

Yet, even casual consideration suggests that from such lives something has been left out whose omission is a personal tragedy. Powerful personality is never created simply by thought and work. Powerful personality has deep interior resources of inspiration and intake. Call it what we will, we will find in every great soul something that goes beyond thinking and working—an inner receptivity, sensitiveness, and hospitality to a world of truth and power higher than the self. Great living is not all output in creative thought and work; it is also intake, the openness of the soul to the Over Soul, the quietness that can hear a still small voice, an inflow, as though, in William James' famous figure, we were bays open to a great deep where the tides rise. Everybody here knows that this third area of experience is real, not simply religiously, but psychologically, factually real.

One of the major tasks of the church today is to help people to recover and to make effective in their lives this third realm of experience, which is the realm of prayer. After all, it is not any more intellectually mysterious than thinking and working are. There are philosophical problems involved in the process of thinking that never have been solved; there are theoretical questions about the operation of free initiative in working to which no one knows the answer; and there are profound mysteries in this inner enrichment and empowerment of life when the tides of the Over Soul flow in. But all these three are factually real, and it takes all three to make a strong life.

Especially in these days we need them all. In this tremendous generation, of course we must think and work, but who of us does not feel that the more strenuous our thought and work become, the more we need that third realm of experience? Paul, in his letter to the

Ephesians, called it being "strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man," or, as Dr. Moffatt translates that verse, "a mighty increase of strength by his Spirit in the inner man."

At the start, it may help some of us if we clear away certain common misunderstandings of prayer. Almost all of us as children start praying by asking for things. Prayer then is begging, and just as we use our fathers and mothers as means for obtaining what we want, so we try to use God, saying, Give me this or that. But then we grow up, and if, indeed, we do grow up, that early, egocentric universe of childhood dissolves, and we find ourselves in this vast cosmos whose God is no errand boy of ours. So one boy who grew up in the last generation described his experience:

> As wider skies broke on his view,
> God greatened in his growing mind;
> Each year he dreamed his God anew,
> And left his older God behind.
>
> He saw the boundless scheme dilate,
> In star and blossom, sky and clod;
> And as the universe grew great,
> He dreamed for it a greater God.

Well, that greater God can no longer be an errand boy, prayer to whom means saying, Bring me this or that.

In consequence, many modern people swing away over to the opposite extreme. Prayer, they think, is merely autosuggestion. It is purely subjective, a kind of psychological dumbbell exercise by which one raises one's own spiritual muscle. God thus is left altogether out of prayer, and a man alone with himself gives to himself, as it were, a spiritual massage. But, my friends, that does not account for the facts. Ages ago Isaiah described a fact when he said: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." And a few weeks ago Dr. Alexis Carrel, one of our foremost scientists, described it again: "Prayer is . . . . the most powerful form of energy that one can generate." Now all the way from Isaiah to Alexis Carrel, ask anybody who ever entered into this experience what its nature is, and he will say that it is not simply a man alone tinkering with himself; it is more like a man gone spiritually dry within, who far down in his soul clears away the clutter of impeding obstacles until the cool water of a rising spring, whose sources are far beyond himself, wells up to refresh and reinvigorate his life. To use a modern figure, prayer is plugging in on a current whose sources are cosmic and not simply individual, a current that brings light and power. That is the way Professor Wieman of the University of Chicago put it: "Prayer is completing the circuit."

This then, in general, is what we mean by the third realm of experience necessary to great living. It is not begging God, as though he were our errand boy; it is not self-isolated autosuggestion. It is an inner openness to the Spirit from whom comes, in Paul's words, "a mighty increase of strength." What, then, are some of the elements that enter into this experience?

For one thing, if we are to get it we must deeply feel the need of it. In all great matters the sense of need must precede the discovery of the experience. Of what possible use to some of us is the higher mathematics? Most of us can go on month after month and never think of the higher mathematics. But were we bridge builders, trying to throw a great span across some river like the Hudson, then we would have to have the higher mathematics.

So some kinds of persons feel no need of prayer. They can think a little and work a little, and get by. That is all they want of life. But they are not the persons who most have elevated and dignified the human race. Out of that group who feel no need of this third realm of experience, we never get our great poets, saying with Wordsworth:

> . . . . I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts;

we never get our great musicians, saying with Handel about the Hallelujah Chorus: "I did think I did see all Heaven before me, and the great GOD Himself"; we never get great prophets, saying with Ralph Waldo Emerson: "When I watch that flowing river, which, out of regions I see not, pours for a season its streams into me, I see that I am a pensioner"; we never get anybody remotely like Christ, saying: "I am not alone, but I and the Father." Such creative souls did think and work, but the deeper secret of their greatness was that far within themselves they knew how to complete the circuit and become the media of liberated power.

Now in ordinary life two experiences call out the conscious need of this deep kind of prayer—being up against something too much for us, and undertaking something too hard for us. If some one here is not up against something too much for him, or is not undertaking something too hard for him, the chances are that he will not know what we are talking about and will not care. What, to him, is all this higher mathematics? But can it be that in these days that is true of anybody here?

The question is often asked whether there is now afoot in this country a return to religion. No general answer seems to me possible, but here is a typical individual whom I meet more and more frequently. He has been conventionally a Christian, believing in God, thinking the church a good thing to belong to, valuing his Christian heritage, and it may be hard at work on many Christian tasks after the fashion of those women whom Jonathan Swift once described, who "out of zeal for religion, have hardly time to say their prayers." But today such merely outward and expressive Christianity is to this individual not enough. He is up against something in this terrific world and in himself, and to meet it he must be something that he now is not. He faces, as never before, the need of inward resources of strength for daily life. He is thinking and working as hard as he can but such thought and work are life's branches, the expression and output of one's self, while rootage is his need, not more branches but rootage, by which life strikes deep into the solid earth and draws vitality and strength from unfailing sources. I have seen some remarkable transformations of life in this congregation recently, in people who for the first time have discovered what that kind of experience can mean: "A mighty increase of strength by his Spirit in the inner man." They needed it.

For another thing, if we are to gain this kind of experience, we must not only need it, but clearly see that it cannot be achieved merely by trying hard. The common property of thinking and working is to try hard. We put our wills into our thought and work. But now try your will out in this deeper realm, where the profound issues of your soul's life are concerned.

Will to have resources of inner spiritual power that make you adequate for life! Will to have what Wordsworth called

> . . . . central peace, subsisting at the heart
> Of endless agitation.

Concentrate on the matter, and, focusing your volition, will to have a mighty increase of spiritual strength. Where will such futile straining of volition get you? For here is a basic psychological fact about every one of us—we cannot will such experiences of inner enrichment and power. They do not come by trying, but by another method altogether, which the hymn we just have sung rightly puts into the terms of prayer: "Spirit of God, descend upon my heart."

To be sure, we may have to put our wills into it in order to get to Carnegie Hall on time. We may have to think hard and work fast to make the schedule click. But when now we are in Carnegie Hall, and Kreisler is playing Beethoven's *D Major Concerto,* if all we can do then is to try hard, we might just as well not have come. That occasion, like all supreme occasions, calls for another realm of experience—receptivity, spiritual hospitality, the sensitive and understanding openness of the soul to the Over Soul, the capacity to let the tides flow in when the sky calls to the deep. And if some one says, Well, that is easy, being receptive and responsive, I say, No! It is a thousand times easier to be the kind of person who can hustle, put his back into it, and get the things that trying hard can get, than to be the kind of person who also can complete the circuit until he becomes a medium for liberated power.

What mature person can escape facing this problem sometime or other as the most practical issue in his life? Soon or late, life confronts every one of us with situations that cannot be handled well merely by trying hard. In a crushing grief, an irretrievable bereavement, is there nothing one can do except try hard? In an overwhelming temptation, when the emotional floods are too strong for our volitional resistance, is there nothing to do except try hard? In a day of world-wide catastrophe on a shaken earth, where no one can see a week ahead, is there no source of steadiness, no fountain of fortitude and courage, except trying hard? My friends, the phrase "practical Christianity" has generally been associated with activity, doing something useful and serviceable. I agree. That is practical Christianity. But there is another aspect of Christianity that for ages our fathers and mothers have called prayer, from which at their best they have gained interior resources of spiritual power that enabled them to carry on when carrying on was hard, and that in days like these is practical, if anything is. It is not begging God for things; it is not a man's tinkering with his own soul; it is inwardly establishing contact with a resource of power whose endless supply comes from a great deep. "The water that I shall give him," said Jesus, "shall become in him a well of water springing up." My soul! That is practical.

Consider, now, still another element in this experience. If it is to be real, we must apprehend the fact that when we are alone we are not alone. This is one of the most profound and mysterious facts in human life, the consciousness that when we are alone we are not alone. As the Lenten season moves on, bringing us ever nearer to the Garden of Gethsemane, we may well see in that scene a picture of a universal human experience. Jesus left the world outside

the Garden gate; he left the major group of his disciples at the Garden gate; he left his three closest friends within the Garden gate, and then in solitude he went out under the olive trees—

> Into the woods my Master went,
> Clean forspent, forspent.

But there, alone, he was not alone.

Explain that experience as we will, it cannot be explained away. Elijah amid the loneliness of the desert all the more clearly hearing the still small voice; Socrates ascribing all that was worth while in his life to the guidance of his inner angel; Epictetus, the Stoic, saying, "When you have shut your doors, and darkened your room, remember never to say that you are alone; for you are not alone, but God is within"; Jesus saying, "Enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father . . . . who seeth in secret" —there is a fact of human experience, antedating and outside the Christian tradition as well as within it, not to be explained away. And if some one says that this is an ancient matter, that will not do.

> Thou Life within my life, than self more near,
> Thou veiled Presence infinitely clear,
> From all illusive shows of sense I flee,
> To find my center and my rest in thee.

That is modern.

Here, indeed, is the truth that Professor Whitehead of Harvard was dealing with when he said: "Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness." Well, what do we do with our solitariness? What do we make of this mysterious inner companionship, this sense of presence, this strange effect of solitude that makes a still small voice more audible? Some of us are not making much of it, but the possibilities there, no man knows the limit of. See! What is the major gift of science to the world? Power! A mighty increase of power! Did science then create that power? Not a bit of it. Science discovered that power in the universe and set it free. Science found out the conditions, fulfilling which, the endless dynamic forces of the cosmos are liberated. Electricity is none of man's making, but man has learned how to fulfill the conditions that release it. Atomic energy is a force that man did not create, but that some day man may liberate. Man by himself is still a puny animal; a gorilla is much the stronger. Man's significance lies in another realm —he knows how to fulfill conditions so that universal power not his own is set free. The whole universe as man now sees it is essentially a vast system of power waiting to be released.

Well, in the spiritual realm that is what prayer means. Prayer is inwardly fulfilling conditions so that power is released. I do not believe in miracles in the old terms of broken or suspended law, but I have to believe in these scientific miracles, incredible things done by science through the releasing of cosmic power; and I have to believe in personal miracles, incredible things happening in people and to people and for people who have liberated the divine resources. Listen to Dr. Hadfield, one of the leading psychiatrists of England, describing his failure in trying to cure certain nervous patients, until he brought to bear on them, he says, "faith in the power of God which is the substance of the Christian's confidence and hope. Then," writes Dr. Hadfield, "the patient has become strong." So he wrote a book entitled *The Psychology of Power,* that might be called a psychiatric sermon on our morning's text. For the old experience at the heart of great

religion is going on still in those who discover that when they are alone they are not alone.

To play fair with our subject, however, we must note one more element in this experience. It is not simply comforting, reassuring, enriching, empowering; it is also searching and demanding. Some one here, up to this point, may have resisted the impact of this sermon on himself, saying, After all, what mankind needs today is people who will put their minds to the task and go out and do something for the world. Surely, mankind needs that. But who of us does not know what it means to face a situation where we cannot do much for the world until, first of all, we have done something with ourselves? The longer an orchestra plays, the more it needs to be tuned up. The farther an airplane flies, the more it requires ground service to put it into shape again. There is no evading that law in any realm. When an orchestra or a personality is out of tune, it cannot do anything well for others until it has first done something with itself.

At that point, the profoundest experience of the race has been that there are regenerative forces, not within our power to create, but within our power to appropriate and assimilate. That is true about our bodies. The days come when we cannot physically do anything more for the world until we have done something with ourselves. We are played out and done in. Would any physician say to us then, Think it through and work it out; hard thought and labor are what you need? But it is hard thought and labor that have depleted us. Now we must have intake. Now we must re-establish relationships with sunshine, fresh air, and the open country, and drink in what we never could create, but can appropriate. Why do we try to live as though that universal law, obvious in our bodies, were not true also in our souls?

Nevertheless, when that experience is translated to the spiritual realm, it is not simply comforting and reassuring, but searching and demanding, too. In that deep and inner companionship where we face the still small voice and seek to be made right within, costly and sacrificial things often must be done. Before Niemoeller faced Hitler, we may be sure that Niemoeller faced God. Before he did what he did do for the world, he had to do something with himself—and it was not easy. I am not promising any one ease and comfort only in this profound experience of prayer. Jesus did something for the world on Calvary, but behind that lies his experience in the Garden, where he sweat blood, praying, "Not my will, but thine, be done!" But whatever form this inner communion takes, this is true: No powerful personality ever brought saving help to the world without this third realm of experience within him. All through this congregation, made up of people who spend their days thinking and working, this problem runs today. We are not going to do what we could do for the world until, far within, we have done something with ourselves.

Well, if that regenerating, re-empowering experience is to be ours, then we must give God a chance. We said at the start that one reason why thought and work seem real, and prayer seems unreal, is that prayer is ritualized, and thought and work are not. But that is not the whole truth. Any serious thinker does have special times of seclusion and quiet which he gives to

(*Concluded on page 147*)

Prayer

By Harry Emerson Fosdick

Eternal Spirit, Whom we seek in vain without, unless we first find Thee within, now may the hush of Thy presence fall upon our souls. Quiet our minds of their fretting, allay the unhappy irritations and resentments of our spirits, hallow our lives with the grace of contrition and humility, and prepare us all to receive our heavenly Guest.

Thou art very great. Enlarge our thoughts of Thee! Our worthiest imaginations of Thee can touch only the outskirts of Thy ways. But thanks be to Thee for all Thine intimate approaches! On this day when Thou turnest the shadow of death into the light of the morning, we feel Thee near. All things speak to us of life—the returning sun, the stir of springtime, the promise of the earth reborn, our friends here and departed, our Christ over whom death had no dominion. Deep within us, replenish our spirits with new life, fresh faith, a surer sense of Thy presence, and confidence in Thy victory. And if any here are winter-bound by grief or sin or despair, rise within them, Thou Sun of our souls, and let the springtime of Thy hope and joy come to them!

Unto Thee, O Lord, we cry in the night of the world's darkness, that Thy light may rise there. Is not the earth Thine? Are not the hearts of all men in Thy keeping? Remember the desolate homes, the long suspense of waiting, the sorrows of the exiled and the poor, the growth of hate, the hindrance of good, and hear our cry for peace. By the love we bear to fathers, brothers, lovers, sons, by the long agony of battlefield and hospital, by the woes of mothers, the needs of desolate children, and the starvation of millions, we pray against this arch-enemy of man, this most blasphemous denier of Christ, the curse of war. Raise up leaders for the work of reconciliation and brotherhood. Forgive us all the sins that have brought upon the world this vast catastrophe. And grant us such amendment and dedication that Thou canst reward them with a just and lasting peace.

Hallow the sacred memories that throng our hearts today of those who have departed this life and live with Thee in the house of many mansions. Thou seest their names written in our remembrance. For their fidelity and love, for the radiance that shone through them, and the integrity and friendliness that were in them, we thank Thee. For the confidence that all graves are empty, all stones rolled away, and death swallowed up in victory, we rejoice before Thee. Comfort us all with faith in life eternal. Let no life be so darkened that some light may not fall upon it. And send us out to be more than conquerors even in this difficult world, sure that if God is for us, none can be powerful against us. We pray in Christ's spirit. Amen.

London Under Fire

Most of our readers will recall that Mr. Charles G. Tubbs was identified with the CHURCH MONTHLY in the very beginning, and for a time was its editor. They will recall also the various references we have made to him in recent years. He has been living in London for many years, where he married an Englishwoman. They have one child who is now in this country in the care of the grandmother on Long Isand. Mr. and Mrs. Tubbs, however, have elected to remain in London. Accompanying a recent letter of characteristic interest from Mr. Tubbs, there was this paragraph: "You probably would not want me to let this occasion pass without giving you some lurid details of life in a blitz. Such details have been drafted and after being toned down carefully by our Department of Under-Statement they have been incorporated in a brief memorandum, of which there is a copy herewith." The memorandum is as follows:

The first night of the blitzkrieg last September we had two incendiary bombs on our roof but they were put out promptly and there was no damage as the roof is a garden with plenty of earth. The next night I went up on the roof toward midnight to see whether there were any more of these German visiting cards. There were not, but suddenly something like a ball of fire seemed to rush straight toward me. Then it stopped and remained suspended in mid-air several seconds when it broke apart and fell gradually to earth. It was a Nazi raider which came down in flames. That night at two o'clock in the morning we were awakened by a terrific roar and the sound of falling masonry, with a shower of glass. We thought our house had been hit but it was one block away and what we heard was Madame Tussaud's cinema crashing to earth.

After that I began to be a little nervous about sleeping in bed near a window, so for six weeks we had to sleep on the floor in the corridor adjoining our bedroom. Night after night, with unfailing regularity, the bombing began at sundown and went on almost incessantly for hours, until two, three or four in the morning. The noise was loud and practically continuous, for when it wasn't the bombs it was the A. A. guns. For the first five days the barrage did not seem strong and the Germans appeared to be coming as they chose. Then more and bigger guns came into action and their roar was almost deafening. Sometimes it created the impression of originating almost outside our door. The whole house shook. Practically every single night for weeks on end we had our neighborhood quota of from one to three salvos of bombs. You would hear them coming and for a few seconds one would wonder. . . Then there would either be the roar of an explosion or there would be no roar and one would feel the whole house sway under one's feet like a ship at sea. Our house, by the way, is eight stories high and covers a square block. The swaying told us of the delayed action bombs as they burrowed their way far into the earth. On bad nights the air was cloudy and pungent and one could have mistaken it for smoke, but actually

the atmosphere became heavily laden with the fine powdery dust of collapsing buildings.

One morning we were informed at daybreak that the house was surrounded by five unexploded time bombs which had fallen during the night and that the police had ordered everybody to evacuate the building at once. We stayed for ten days in a hotel in the suburbs until we were permitted to re-enter. We were glad to leave this hotel because it was an old building and sometimes it shook like a rowboat in the open sea.

In those memorable evenings all one could do was eat and then go to bed—on the floor. The corridor walls and the doors helped to deaden the roar but even then sometimes it was hard to sleep. I would often try to sit at the table in my study and write but repeatedly there would be the ominous swish overhead outside and I would have to dash into the corridor and wait to hear the result. At that time we invited friends to come to our house for a bath. We have water from our own artesian wells but many were without it and also without gas for cooking.

The winter blitz has been less intense and we have not slept in the corridor for months. Nevertheless, there are some vivid memories. I shall never forget the December night when the City of London was burning. We watched it from our roof. It was the biggest fire I had ever seen in my life—a solid mass of flames and smoke about half a mile or more wide. Then there was the evening before Christmas when we were returning home on foot about seven o'clock. The street was dark as pitch in the blackout with no moon. In the twinkling of an eye we were surrounded with falling incendiaries which burned in the street with their white unearthly glow. Our approach and retreat were cut off by these bombs burning on three sides of us. Furthermore some of the buildings had caught and we could see more than one blaze in progress above our heads. Then I heard a swish and for the one and only time so far we lay flat on the pavement, but fortunately it proved to be just another lot of incendiaries which landed about fifty feet behind us. Only a few weeks ago a small bomb struck the edge of our roof in the middle of the day but it only tore off a section of the coping.

The church where we were married has been damaged, so has the hotel where our wedding reception was held. Recently one of my wife's bridesmaids was killed, with her mother and two other women, by a direct hit on their house. At first they were not positive my wife's friend had been in the house but her steel helmet was found. . .

One could, of course, go on at great length writing impressions of the blitz, especially since a vigorous one is in progress at this moment. I hear no bombs but I hear bombers and the shells are bursting overhead like thunder in the sky. Perhaps a little later when we have had quiet for some time I shall hear, as we did last night, a fragment of a shell fall outside our windows. We collect these fragments and turn them in so they can be used again for shell manufacture.

This must sound a dreary chronicle but the actual experience, though sometimes unpleasant, has not been so bad as I had anticipated. The Nazis can create inconvenience, like a bull that breaks loose and goes charging down the street, but nobody supposes for half a minute that the bull can take permanent pos-

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The Foreign Student Committee of The Riverside Church

By Edgar J. Fisher

Chairman, the Foreign Student Committee

In a critical time such as this the work of the Foreign Student Committee should be of particular significance. Various groups in our church have been doing much and doing well in assisting refugee students in these unhappy times, and the Foreign Student Committee has aided in this area of need in this backward period. There are, however, stranded foreign students in our neighborhood. Coming from free and independent countries, these young people were caught here when totalitarian aggression seized their homelands, or created situations that make it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to return whence they came. And there is also the regular flow of students from countries still nominally at peace, but greatly disturbed and troubled by this total war. In a peculiar way just now all students resident in foreign lands—not only those within our gates, but our students abroad—have reasonable claims upon the thought and attention of the communities in which they are resident.

The activities sponsored by the Foreign Student Committee are varied. Several program functions are held each season at the church. In early Fall, the opening reception of the year has been a reception in honor of Dr. and Mrs. Fosdick and the Associate Ministers of The Riverside Church. Largely attended by the foreign students, this gives them an early opportunity to hear and meet Dr. Fosdick and his colleagues in an informal and intimate way. A Christmas party is regularly held to which not only foreign students in the New York City area are invited, but also the considerable number, of whom we are able to secure information, who come to this city for the holiday season. A third annual program function is the "Velada," or reception for Latin-American students, an event which is held as near as convenient to Pan-American Day. A Fall and a Spring picnic have been organized for the foreign students, but experience shows that these have not proved as popular with our visitors as might be expected.

Formerly the Committee held a larger number of affairs with definite program than the three mentioned above. This season regular monthly informal "Coffee Hours" have been sponsored with absolutely no program of entertainment. At this time friendly, personal association has special value, and the foreign students, with the members of the Committee and invited American guests, have had excellent opportunities to become better acquainted. The art of conversation is more highly developed among our foreign friends than with us, and these "programless" functions seem to be greatly appreciated. They are held at a definite time every month, and the stu-

dents have been made to feel and understand that they are welcome, not only when they receive a special invitation, but each month with the regularity of the calendar. The comparatively large number of students who attend regularly month after month is an indication that these functions are enjoyed and fill a need. With entire informality, and according to their plans for the evening, some come early and leave early, others come late and leave late, while still others come early and leave late! It is not at all customary for those of one nationality to center in one group, but several circles include members of various nationalities, all in interested and friendly converse, whether their respective governments are officially at war or in peace! This monthly scene is simply another argument to the effect that war is supremely stupid, and can never be the final word.

In addition to the program events and the informal Coffee Hours, the Foreign Student Committee encourages interested members of the congregation to invite individual students to their homes. Indeed, one of the main purposes of the group meetings is to bring American friends in touch with individual foreign students in order that the latter shall be invited to homes. This private hospitality has deep significance and is assuredly of mutual value to guests and hosts. There are special occasions, as at Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter, when it seems particularly appropriate to invite students into the homes. But it is the conviction of the Committee that private invitations to homes should be naturally and usually offered as an expression of abounding friendliness, and should not be regarded as a seasonal interest.

There is a special appeal which the Foreign Student Committee desires to make at this time to the members of The Riverside Church. Normally, many of the foreign students come to the United States for only one year of study. But in this difficult period of war, it is impossible for many students to return to their countries, and equally difficult for them to secure funds from their homes due to currency restrictions. They are often in need of hospitality and assistance during the long summer vacation, in return for which they can render efficient service of various kinds, such as camp counselor, tutor, companion for older or younger members of the family, helper in various ways in town or in country. Persons who can offer opportunities to foreign students, or know of others who can do so, are asked to communicate with the chairman of the Foreign Student Committee, or with Mrs. Katherine W. Eddy at the church, and they will be put in touch with qualified students. This is a form of service of great importance.

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THE BOARD OF USHERS

On Understanding the Refugees

"THE Plight and Promise of the Refugees" is the title of a little brochure sent out by The Riverside Church Refugee Committee. The imagination and sympathies of those of us who have had any contact with the people who have fled from their home lands is immediately quickened by this phrase, but whether we really know the facts or really have an appreciation of the situation in which the refugee finds himself may be another matter.

On April 16th we had the rare opportunity of hearing Sir Norman Angell tell about this old yet new situation from a world-wide point of view.

Professor Hertha Kraus of Bryn Mawr has written on the subject "The Plight of the Refugees in a Preoccupied World."

The very title of Dr. Kraus's dissertation summons up another set of ideas, and should raise the question in the minds of each of us—are we ourselves too preoccupied with our own concerns to give consideration to the preoccupations of these others? What are *their* preoccupations?

Are we not likely to understand less rather than more as we meet them in the midst of flight?

Unlike our Pilgrim Fathers they have not come as one group with a single purpose, and although they have not met the dangers of the early colonists, neither do they have the privilege of creating their own plan of action. There have been too many of us who have come before them, and the environment which we have created is so complicated and so crowded that they must lose their identity in order to gain even a small place.

To quote from Dr. Kraus:

"The world around the refugee is indeed preoccupied with many important issues not in the least related to him; but the refugee is also preoccupied. He is concerned with the problems of a wartorn world, 3,000 miles away, which is very close to him and of which he is still a part, but which seems rather distant from the pleasant, busy, polite American community. He is filled with haunting fears for the fate of friends and relatives who are still in Central Europe and those who, having found temporary refuge in European countries now overrun by war, are threatened again by the same sinister powers which they have just escaped. He feels in every nerve, day and night, their helplessness, imagines their desperate outcries for protection, the tortures of mind and body they are facing. He wants to do something to rescue at least a few of them—the very young, the very aged, those whose powers of resistance must be weakest—and he is completely preoccupied by fantastic schemes for their rescue. Here is a matter of life and death, tremendously urgent, calling for the utmost concentration and immediate action, something of absorbing interest to him, and to him alone. What does he care, just now, whether he has made another slip in social form, whether he has intelligently conformed to certain requirements which he has barely understood and which seem trivial to him in the midst of his own preoccupation? . . .

"He has not sought a new country because of economic attractions, but primarily for shelter, driven by tyranny and panic and not by plan. His old world has been shattered, and he is bent upon escape, on reaching an asylum. What he actually reaches is the busy New World, teeming with its own problems, intent on safeguarding life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness for those whom it accepts as its own. . . .

"When the refugee first arrives, he visualizes America as a continent still in the pioneer stage, wide open to immigrants, under-populated, full of opportunities for anyone who is eager to work, and actually in need of European skills. A rude awakening is bound to follow. The refugee begins to realize with a painful shock that the American community questions both his ability to function as a satisfactory wage earner in a new setting and his moral claim to find an opportunity for gainful employment. It may see him as a competitor, while he fully believes that European training and vocational experience are badly needed, and that he has something to offer for which America is waiting. Just as American mores are strange and bewildering to him, unreal in their significance, so is the pattern of American educational and vocational life. He needs help to understand realities and to face them frankly, but the busy American community, preoccupied with its own struggles for expansion and survival, can hardly be expected to meet, without interpretation, the needs of the stranger within its gates."

In the matter of his political loyalties, we again quote from Dr. Kraus.

"In recent days, the challenge of speedy assimilation within the cultural pattern and the challenge for vocational reorientation have lost a good deal of their significance under the impact of a new problem with which the newcomer is faced. What about his political loyalties? Is he ready to take sides against an aggressor nation which seems bent on the destruction of peoples and moral principles in an ever widening range? It is the same nation with which, until recently, he has been identified through many generations, whose language he cherishes as his mother tongue, of whose culture he was once proud.

"It seems of singular significance today to have the refugee in this country face this issue with frankness and deepest sincerity. It also seems important to help the community, demanding an unqualified answer, to understand the immigrant in a situation which may be considered ambiguous and yet which basically is not. The entire refugee community is on the side of democracy, eager to strengthen it and to see it victorious, willing to share any responsibility which may be involved in democracy's titanic struggle. The refugee has no political loyalty whatever to a government which stands for ruthless expansion and the destruction of minorities, and which has forced him out by tyranny. He has experienced the poisoning, deadly power of its philosophy, and his mind is still filled with the unspeakable horror of his experience which can never be put into adequate words—words which would carry meaning to those who have not shared it. He has seen this same horror creeping over new territories, reaching out for further destruction, and he has pleaded innumerable times with the leaders and peoples of the democracies to wake up to the sinister implications of such a movement, to take action against it, worthy of free people who

want freedom, and to consider the protection of human and moral values as their own treasured right and responsibility. These values have been in danger for some years now, and the stream of refugees from Central Europe and the dictator nations has borne living testimony to it. . . .

"The psychologist tells us that man has only two innate fears: the fear of loud noises and of losing support, of falling. All other fears are learned, and can be unlearned. Fears are creeping up everywhere today in our struggling, chaotic world. The very anguish of the battlefields of Europe, of the armies of refugees driven by armies of soldiers, reaches across the ocean to the American continent, which until recently had lived in isolation. We were unprepared for the terrible impact and will need time to rally. Because we have trusted so much and so easily to the good will and innate fairness of each and all, dictators included, we are sorely disillusioned now and begin to be very suspicious, even of the strangers in our midst, who were the first victims of the tyranny which we are now beginning to understand in its true implications. They would not be here today if our government had not applied the principles and laws of democracy which have given them the privilege of asylum and a claim to a new national home.

"Now it is up to the newcomer to express his appreciation in terms of a useful coöperative life and in free and willing acceptance of the American pattern of living. It is up to the American community, a people raised to respect individual differences, to give their new neighbors the basic security which comes from understanding; to provide, in American attitude and action, under trying pressure, the test of a strong, invincible, living democracy in which we may place supreme faith and trust."

THE EASTER SUNDAY SIDEWALK

A Story of the Hymn "Lord of Our Life and God of Our Salvation"

By Eloise R. Griffith

This magnificent hymn, a prayer for peace, was written in 1840 by Philip Pusey, elder brother of the Reverend Dr. Edward B. Pusey, one of the most famous leaders of the Oxford Movement which at that time was causing bitter controversy throughout the length and breadth of England.

Philip Pusey was a country gentleman, a member of Parliament, and an authority on art and philosophy. He, like his distinguished brother, was a speaker and writer of unusual power and persuasiveness. On his large estate he worked out several interesting experiments in agriculture which immensely helped his tenants toward more just and happy conditions; in Parliament he fought for reforms in the administration of the Poor Laws, and wrote pamphlets and papers on social, economic and political matters which had wide influence on the times.

But the religious beliefs of his brother Edward seriously hampered Philip's Parliamentary career, for frequently during his speeches his colleagues accused him of being party to his brother's "Romish" leanings and plans to bring back the papacy to England and her Church. It was after a particularly acrimonious debate in the House of Commons that Philip sought out his clergyman brother at Oxford. After a long and earnest argument in Edward's study, during which Philip sought to persuade Edward to give up some of the dangerous doctrines and practices he was advocating, and to be more reasonable in his sermons and tracts, neither of the brothers was able to yield on any important point. Greatly saddened, Philip left Edward, remembering, however, that they were still brothers and still members of the same Church. On returning to his home, he wrote this hymn:

Lord of our life, and God of our salvation,
Star of our night, and hope of every nation,
Hear and receive Thy Church's supplication,
Lord God Almighty.

See round Thine Ark the hungry billows curling;
See how Thy foes their banners are unfurling;
Lord, while their darts envenomed they are hurling,
Thou canst preserve us.

Lord, Thou canst help when early armor faileth;
Lord, Thou canst save when deadly sin assaileth;
Lord, o'er Thy Rock nor death nor hell prevaileth;
Grant us Thy peace, Lord.

Peace, in our hearts, our evil thoughts assuaging,
Peace, in Thy Church, where brothers are engaging,
Peace, when the world its busy war is waging;
Calm Thy foes raging!

Grant us Thy help till backward they are driven;
Grant them Thy truth, that they may be forgiven;
Grant peace on earth, and after we have striven,
Peace in Thy Heaven.

A vivid experience in his early manhood had a profound and sobering effect on all of Philip Pusey's subsequent life. He and his college chum, Henry Herbert, afterwards Earl of Carnarvon, were traveling near Mont-

serrat in Catalonia, Spain. A band of insurgent guerrillas fell upon them suddenly, and for several hours they were in danger of being shot. Their deliverance was something of a miracle.

Disraeli said of Philip Pusey: "He was one of the most distinguished country gentlemen who ever sat in the House of Commons; rare in accomplishments; rare in ability." Most of Philip's speeches, pamphlets and articles are forgotten; but this hymn remains to keep his memory green. Edward Pusey's famous sermons and tracts are no longer widely read, and he left no hymns by which he is remembered today.

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LONDON UNDER FIRE

(*Concluded from page 139*)

session of the street. More dangerous, it seems to me, is the battle at sea, for courage and determination cannot alone hold the fort or take the offensive without the essential supplies of which this country has always been obliged to import large quantities. That is where America's help is indispensable.

I shall close these few random notes with a pleasant memory. The Prime Minister has paid us the compliment of reviewing our American Motorized Squadron of the Home Guard. On a raw January morning, as we stood on the historic Horse Guards Parade, Winston Churchill looked every one of us squarely and solemnly in the eye—the man who is not afraid.

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WHEN PRAYER MEANS POWER

(*Concluded from page 136*)

thinking. Any serious worker does have special places and methods by means of which his work gains competence. Many of us, however, vaguely and in general agreeing with what we have been saying this morning, never give the inner companionship of the divine Spirit any special time. Less and less frequently we nourish it with worship, deepen it with reading, enrich it with meditation. John Owen lived in the seventeenth century, but one could almost think he had airplanes in mind when he wrote, "When Christ comes . . . . upon the soul, he hath no quiet landing-place." So! No quiet landing-place!

Personally, I should hate to live through days like these without the deep experience of divine companionship, and of available resources greater than my own. I know that the old Hebrew story about the three Israelites cast into a burning fiery furnace, and walking through it without so much as the smell of fire upon their garments, is a tale and not actual history, but it is a symbolic tale and a true parable for our times. For this is written of them, that there walked with them through the burning fiery furnace one like unto "the Son of God." Who here does not need that experience? No furnace so fiery hot that there does not walk through it with us a divine companion, from everlasting to everlasting God.

Dr. Fosdick preached the foregoing sermon March 30, 1941.

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JUST IN PASSING—

No single year in the recent history of The Riverside Church has seen such significant changes and adjustments as have transpired here in the past Winter and Fall.

First, there was the formal presentation of the new plan of organization with its seven divisions of responsibility, five of them under the direction of the Board of Deacons, and two of them under the Board of Trustees. The plan also provided for a lay member of the Board of Deacons to be chairman of that group, whereas previously the minister of the church has been the chairman. Now the plan is really taking on life, and it is apparent that the coming year will find the church program very definitely influenced by the increased number of church members who will be functioning in the realm of policy and of administration.

Of course, the One Hundredth Anniversary stands out prominently in the program of the past Winter. That, too, is in more senses than one a continuing experience, for it very definitely contributed to our sense of oneness and of continuity.

One thing that was identified with the celebration of the anniversary needs some slight emphasis here, namely, the Anniversary Fund. Many pledges made at that time were and are payable by July first. We hope all who made such pledges will bear in mind that the Committee is depending upon payment being made by the end of June. In fact, they have already counted that money and this word is emphasized merely as a reminder. At the same time we would remind other friends who have not pledged that there is still time in the calendar and room in the Fund for them to pledge and to pay.